

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A model system for Hepatitis C virus infection in humans, comprising a non-human mammal, wherein the mammal has a normal immune system but has been rendered immunologically tolerant to human hepatocytes by fetal tolerization and subsequently transplanted with human hepatocytes and infected with Hepatitis C virus, whereby replication of Hepatitis C virus occurs in the model system.

2. (Previously presented) The model system of claim 1, wherein the human hepatocytes are cells of the Huh7 cell line.

3. (Currently amended) A method of preparing a non-human fetal mammal to receive a human hepatocyte transplant, comprising the steps of:

(i) administering to the fetal mammal an effective amount of human hepatocytes, in a form selected from the group consisting of whole cells and a cell lysate, wherein the hepatocytes render the mammal immunologically tolerant to human hepatocytes; and

(ii) administering to the mammal an effective amount of an agent, wherein the agent is metabolized by hepatocytes to produce a cytotoxin.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 3, wherein the agent is retrorsine.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 3, further comprising, after step ii, and after the mammal has been born, the step of introducing human hepatocytes into the

mammal, wherein the number of introduced hepatocytes is effective in colonizing the liver of the mammal.